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Conscience.

Act the last, Scene the last.

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CONSCIENCE.

A Tragedy.

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS WILLIAM IFFLAND.

BY

Benjamin Thompson, Esq.



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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. WEHRMAN, *in Office under Government.*

MR. TALLAND.

LEWIS, *his Son, Secretary to Wehrman.*

RATHING, *Talland's Son-in-law, and an Advocate.*

BOLFELD, *Comptroller of the Customs.*

ELLOF, *an Emigrant Farmer.*

HENRY, *Talland's Servant.*

MRS. RATHING, *Talland's Daughter.*

FREDERICA SOLTAU.

MISS BOLFELD, *Sister of Bolfeld, and Talland's House-keeper.*



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CONSCIENCE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A Room in Rathings's House. Enter Mr. and Mrs. RATHING.*

Rath. I SEE your brother coming. Speak seriously to him, I beseech you. His dissatisfaction with your father, his attachment to high life, and his consequent distance towards us all, daily increase.

Mrs. R. Alas, too true!—Perhaps he may feel still more uneasy at the alteration of my father's looks. His friends now scarcely recognize him.

Rath. I fear——but see, your brother comes. I will withdraw, for I should say too much, and rather hurt than support our intentions. [Exit.

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. (*Throws his hat on the table.*) What a life do we lead at home!

Mrs. R. Has any thing particular happened?

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Lew No. All goes on as usual.—My father is insufferable.

Mrs. R. The poor man—

Lew. Was worth six thousand dollars before he inherited from a stranger whom he had obliged thirty thousand more, since which time he has accustomed himself to eat half as much as is necessary, and to make himself miserable from morning to night.

Mrs. R. The fortune which he inherited has indeed afforded him little gratification.

Lew. Because he—

Mrs. R. (*With warmth.*) Because his feelings are of a nature so delicate that we must respect them.

Lew. Very delicate feelings he must have truly, who, when in possession of a large fortune, can suffer his children to be in want.

Mrs. R. My husband and I do not complain.

Lew. But in what a miserable style do you live? No Other means must be adopted. Such is the opinion of Mr. Wehrman too—and he is our friend. Were our father poor, we ought to submit patiently, but with such a fortune—

Mrs. R. Does he not live in a still more frugal way than any of us?

Lew. Yes—and his old house-keeper in a more extravagant way than any of us.

Mrs. R. She attended on his deceased friend, who left him the thirty thousand dollars. Is it not, therefore, natural that he should behave well to her?

Lew. He will at last, perhaps, behave so well as to prove his gratitude by marrying her.

Mrs. R. Lewis, Lewis!

Lew. I suspect the worst, when I daily observe how generous he is towards other people—how niggardly towards his children.

Mrs. R. Your dissatisfaction makes every thing worse than it really is.

Lew. He was more generous towards us before he obtained this large fortune. Our home was then the abode of cheerfulness, and he gratified all our wishes. There was not a more affectionate father in the world, or one who every moment convinced his children so completely that they were his sole delight. No sooner did his friend die, and he become possessed of thousands, than avarice and misery took possession of the house, and no one was allowed any controul but the infernal housekeeper.

Mrs. R. I still revere my father, and though often obliged to exert my patience, I will, nevertheless, repay the sincere affection, which so often appears through his melancholy, like a sun-beam through a cloud.—*Lewis*, it may be in our power to learn the cause of his sorrow by persuasion, but far be it from us to attempt to learn it by compulsion.

Lew. My heart agrees to this, but my reason asks whether I can learn to live without eating, and if I can, whether I ought to do it, for the purpose of gratifying a whim.—I must live.

Mrs. R. You live in—

Lew. I involve myself in debt. Is it more proper that I should remain the prey of usurers, and at last lose all credit, than that I should request my father to spare me a portion of his superfluous wealth?

Mrs. R. You lose your credit more by your conduct than your debts.

Lew. What part of my conduct displeases you?

Mrs. R. Were I to mention nothing else, your intimacy with Wehrman—

Lew. Does he not visit your house daily?

Mrs. R. I allow that he does, and my motive for not declining the acquaintance is that I may discover his inten-

tions. He is our father's enemy. He never will forget that when persuaded by the artifices of a base woman to whom he was attached, he was guilty of injustice, and that his partiality—his refusal of the orphan's just claims were proved by our father. The business was taken out of his hands, and transferred to the man who convicted him, whereby the injured obtained redress.

Lew. With far too much exultation.

Mrs. R. The exultation was not on the part of our father, but of the redressed.—Do you think Wehrman will ever pardon this?

Lew. Yet he seems pleased in every opportunity of visiting you.

Mrs. R. He exasperates you against our father, and attempts to convince me too that—

Lew. He sees our father's folly in the same light that every body sees it. No. He is my friend—my sincere friend. Through him I have been introduced to the world.

Mrs. R. Alas! The world, as you call it—

Lew. Would you have me always stay at home?

Mrs. R. You aim at the talent of feeling at home when in splendid parties. Of what advantage can this be to one of your rank, which is inferior to theirs?

Lew. Why not? Might not your husband remain an honest man, and yet raise himself by his talents above the sphere of middle rank?

Mrs. R. You always make references to other people.

Lew. And you never, though they interfere with what is your own right. Miss Bolfeld lives luxuriously, while we are starving.

Mrs. R. Overlook this one unaccountable weakness in our father, for the sake of his numerous virtues.

Lew. How am I to pay my debts?

Mrs. R. Were you obliged to incur them?

Lew. If you be satisfied with the life you lead, affection forbids that I should by my observations disturb your tranquillity. But be equally just towards me, and do not attempt to confine my extensive plans and hopes within a narrow circle. Act as you please in your own behalf. I can extricate myself.

Mrs. R. In what way?

Lew. By appealing to the affection and understanding of my father. If in the midst of riches he will starve, it will hurt me, but I cannot help it; me he must at least assist, unless he wishes to think as ill of himself, as the world already thinks of him. I know what I may become, and what I will become, if I have a father, who deserves the name. [Exit.

Re-enter RATHING.

Rath. Your advice has been fruitless, I fear.

Mrs. R. Dear good William, how many cares do I heap upon you!

Rath. A sympathy with virtue is not care. It animates the faculties and exalts the whole man.

Mrs. R. When you married me, you were justified in the expectation of a considerable portion, instead of which you only receive the interest of my share in my mother's small fortune.

Rath. When I solicited your hand, I thought not of your portion. With sincerity I can declare that every enjoyment which I anticipated I have richly found in the possession of Maria.

Mrs. R. But so few conveniences of life—

Rath. These we shall obtain in old age.—Manhood is the time for action.—We sow at present, and believe me we shall one day reap.

Mrs. R. I do believe you. But forgive me if I mention what I, perhaps, ought to conceal. It grieves me to behold men of your age, whose pretensions and whose intellects are far more limited, filling honourable offices, and enjoying the emoluments of them, while you renounce them, and withdraw from the world that you may live for me and my relations.

Rath. By no means—

Mrs. R. That you may by your mode of life accommodate yourself to the peculiarities of my father.—It is a kindness, which I cannot silently accept, feeling, as I do, its full value.

Rath. You value it at too high a rate! My own inclination in some degree leads me to this mode of life. I do not like the society of the world, and should feel all the horrors of *ennui*, were I obliged to frequent the innumerable rapid routs of the great. My humble meal at our little table is far preferable to a banquet.—I do not apply for any office, because the consciousness of diligence and honesty makes a man as good a character as the state can boast, and domestic tranquillity as happy a one.

Mr. R. (*Embraces him.*) Dear good William!

Rath. Yet I have a care, which you can remove.

Mrs. R. Oh, name it.

Rath. Wehrman comes too often hither, and I perceive that he is pleased with your society. As to any jealousy on my part, I trust you think me incapable of it.—We know each other, and feel the value of each other.

Mrs. R. We do indeed.

Rath. I perceive that you do not object to his visits at my house, merely because you hope through his interest to meliorate the situation of your brother and myself.

Mrs. R. He has given me cause to hope for his assistance.

Rath. I thank you for your good intentions and do not doubt his, but I wish not to be promoted in such a way. Besides, his visits do not suit our humble mode of life. He is a man of the world, who wishes rather to appear possessed of sense than feeling, and who knows how to make all his humours and desires wear the appearance of deliberate reflection. Such a man as this can never bring peace or happiness into a family—and I know no happiness but peace. Such a man can never bear to see another satisfied with mediocrity. He thinks this a prejudice which ought to be opposed, undermined and destroyed, and it is much sooner destroyed than restored.

Mrs. R. I will decline his visits.

Rath. Not in an abrupt way—but by degrees.

Mrs. R. I understand you. I must, however, mention that his politeness and sympathy have ever appeared equal, and that he has never trespassed beyond the bounds of that propriety which is sanctioned by friendship.

Rath. Perhaps he never will. I repeat that I think him better than he wishes to appear. But for this very reason he compels us to treat him according to his appearance.

Enter BOLFELD.

Bol. Your servant. My name is Bolfeld.

Rath. May I enquire your business, sir?

Bol. In a private conversation with you I will explain it.

[*Mrs. R. curtsies and is going.*

But no. Stay, madam, Stay. What I have to mention relates to your father.

Rath. Be seated, sir.

Bol. I don't chuse it.

Rath. As you please. Proceed, then.

Bol. Well—you know that my sister lives in the capacity of house-keeper at Mr. Talland's house. The poor creature used to wait upon the late Mr Soltau, and was transferred with the property to your father.

Mrs. R. Who treats her as if she were a relative.

Bol. Mercy on us! What do you mean?

Rath. What do *you* mean, sir?

Bol. Is not the old gentleman a grumbling avaricious—

Mrs. R. Does *she* complain of his avarice?

Bol. In a word, he may soon, perhaps, quit this world, and it is, therefore, natural to ask what reward my poor silly sister is to expect for her faithful services and attention to the strange old curmudgeon?

Rath. Use more becoming expressions, sir.

Bol. Has he declared what she is to have? I must know how much.

Rath. I don't interfere with my father-in-law's will.

Bol. But you would like to read it, I suppose. A dead father-in-law is the best father-in-law—eh?

Mrs. R. I can stay no longer. [Exit.]

Bol. Mercy on us! What a tender-hearted daughter!

Rath. To the point, sir. In what respect does my father-in-law's will concern you?

Bol. In a very material respect. I am my sister's heir, and she will probably not marry,—or at least I shall advise her to remain single. She is, to be sure, younger than I am, but she will doubtless depart before me, for she is of a choleric disposition, and is troubled with an asthmatic complaint in the spring. Now, should this take her off—why, of course, I step forward to claim her property.

Rath. Well—and what is this to me?

Bol. I want you to manage matters in such a way as that—that—that some sum may be fixed—some recompence I mean, for the poor silly creature's attendance.

Rath. no more, sir!

Bol. If you wish to import a trifling quantity of wine—coffee—silk—I am comptroller of the customs—carry the goods to the right—I'll look to the left.

Rath. Paltry — Begone, sir.

Bol. You will not, then?—Well—my sister and I must go to the old fellow himself, and see what we can do with him.

Rath. You are capable of attempting any thing, no doubt.

Bol. Yes, and of succeeding in any thing. Ha! Ha! Ha! My sister says that ideas are free, but my ideas generally produce a heavy impost.—There are few men, whose dealings may not be taxed.—Your servant.—But mercy on us, I had nearly forgotten a principal object of my visit. Pray what do you think of your brother-in-law—young Taland—the secretary?

Rath. Why do you ask this?

Bol. He has paid attention to my daughter.

Rath. The family never wished him to do so.

Bol. What says the old gentleman to it?

Rath. I hope he is ignorant of it.

Bol. Well—then, what think you?

Rath. He is a young man, and of a warm temperament—I think you a cautious father.

Bol. Your ideas of me are correct. I have taken proper precautions—otherwise I should not have admitted him into the house.—My enquiries only arise from my surprise at not having seen him this week.

Rath. Indeed!

Bol. I hope he will conduct himself properly, for I am not to be jested with.

Rath. How do you expect him to conduct himself?

Bol. I expect him to keep his promise to marry the girl.

Rath. (*Astonished.*) Has he promised this?

Bol. He has.

Rath. But without the knowledge and consent of his family.—

Bol. He is of age.

Rath. Does it seem to you right that he should without any reference—

Bol. His references are not my concern.

Rath. I must own you astonish me.

Bol. Why? my Sabina is a pretty girl.

Rath. But I think—

Bol. It is better not to think. For my own part, I have three objects at present in view, and the sooner one is obtained, the sooner can I proceed to the execution of the other two.—When I proceed, I generally succeed.

Rath. The matter requires consideration at all events.

Bol. By no means. Every man knows at once whether he will or will not do a thing. If he will not marry my daughter—why I know how to act.

Rath. I'll speak to his father and brother-in-law.

Bol. That is proper—but I give notice—marry her he must, or pay dearly for his conduct.

Rath. One ought not to be too soon alarmed.

Bol. True, that has always been my maxim.—At what hour shall I receive an answer?

Rath. How! you must, of course, conceive—

Bol. I'll tell you what I conceive—that you wish to make my daughter and myself appear to the world a couple of fools. Now I never was thought a fool, and I never will be. I shall return for an answer in the course of to-day, and if that answer be not accordant to my wishes, your brother-in-law shall soon be known to the whole world for — — you understand me—marriage or money—play or pay. [*Exit.*

Rath. Unguarded young man! what has he done?

Enter WEHRMAN.

Web. Good morning, my dear sir.

Rath. Your servant, Mr. Wehrman.

Web. You seem agitated—this is unusual.

Rath. No man is at all times on his guard.

Web. Of course, you too are at length displeased with the conduct of your father-in-law.

Rath. Indeed I am not. My good father-in-law.

Web. Good! A man like you ought never to apply a word without a meaning to it.—Were your father-in-law good, times would be better with you, and his son. He is a morose old man, who embitters your life and his own.

Rath. Say not so I beseech you.

Web. You will at least discover that nothing can be effected by mere submissive patience, and I have resolved to see you in a better situation.

Rath. I feel truly obliged to you.

Web. My plan in your behalf wants nothing but your own assistance.

Rath. Your goodness makes me feel ashamed. I have myself no plan, and do not wish that any other person should project one in my behalf.

Web. That is a fault. You should always be projecting plans. After many have failed, one may at last succeed. You must be forwarded—but you yourself must assist in obtaining a promotion. Frequent visits—

Rath. Weary the patron.

Web. So much the better. The petitioner's request is at last granted, in order that his importunity may be avoided.

Rath. I should be sorry to obtain any request on such terms.

Web. You may be truly useful to the state, but you conceal your virtues. When virtue wishes to be rewarded, she must become a coquette. A man of business ought to calculate at his desk as accurately how he is to shine, as a lady at her toilet.

Rath. I believe you are right—but I was not born to act thus.

Web. We are born as nothing, and may make ourselves every thing. Apropos. Talking of ladies, I hope Mrs. Rath is well.

Rath. She is, sir, I thank you.

Web. She too must be introduced to the world. You both ought to occupy higher stations. A place is at present vacant which will suit you.—I have mentioned your name.—Make application.—I am sure you will be successful.

Rath. (*Bows.*) I must see.

Web. You must act. Be not so proud as to neglect yourself; I will assist you as far as I can, and thereby avenge myself on your father-in-law. He has almost ruined my credit, and I intend in return to make him an affectionate father to his children.

Rath. Your words are as smooth as your thoughts, but the smoothest steel cuts deepest.—Is it not a thankless office to serve people against their inclination?

Web. Who requires thanks?—I want to serve myself by serving you. The conduct of your father-in-law has cost me many a sleepless night. Mine be the game and your's the gain.

Rath. I am firmly resolved never to accept any thing on such terms, and seriously beg you will desist from your purpose.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. Good morning, my son. [Bows to Weh.

Weh. Well, Mr. Talland, how goes it? Still gloomy and dejected?

Tal. (Looks solemnly at him.) Did you sleep well last night, Mr. Wehrman?

Weh. (Smiling.) I am, at all events, in very good spirits this morning.

Tal. Such a man as you cannot be so without reason.

Weh. I'll just pay my respects to Mrs. Rath. You, gentlemen, may, in the mean time, shrug your shoulders at me. [Exit.

Rath. You are well, sir, I hope?

Tal. Rid yourself of that man.

Rath. We are devising the means of doing it.

Tal. He corrupts my son.

Rath. My dear sir, you must absolutely endeavour to raise your spirits.

Tal. My spirits are always better when I come hither.

Rath. Go to some watering-place.

Tal. It would be too expensive.

Rath. With your fortune—

Tal. Mention not that.

Rath. I really mention it only on your account.

Tal. You are a good man—a very good man.

Rath. You do not allow yourself even the conveniences of life. You do nothing to recruit your constitution, but suffer it gradually to decay.

Tal. Yes, yes—sometimes I allow myself—

Rath. You even forfeit your breakfast.

Tal. (Confused.) Who told you this?

Rath. Forgive your children, if affection urged them to enquire.

Tal. My breakfast—did not agree with me—for that reason—

Rath. (Grasps his hand.) For that reason?—For that reason only?

Tal. Leave me as I am.

Rath. Your goodness towards others is unceasing. It is only towards yourself you are unjust.

Tal. If I but act justly towards you, I am satisfied.

Rath. Dear sir!

Tal. There is the amount of interest due to you.—(*Rath. takes it and bows*)—It is but little, yet do not bear ill-will against me, children. I—I can do no more for you.

Rath. Do we evince any expectation of more?

Tal. No—oh, no. The other property—which I inherited—

Rath. Let us not speak of that.

Tal. Old Soltau had legal heirs—I did not deserve it—I ought not to have accepted it.

Rath. Of late you have often mentioned this subject. Follow the impulse of your heart, and bestow a considerable sum on the heir of your late friend.

Tal. His two nephews are dead.

Rath. Indeed!

Tal. (With tremulous utterance.) They are dead.

Rath. Are you sure of this?

Tal. I am. They fell in the field of battle, to which despair had led them.

Rath. May not inclination—

Tal. Oh, no, no, no! (*Throws himself into a chair.*)

Rath. (After a pause.) His niece is still alive.

Tal. True.

Rath. Act towards her as you are no longer able to act towards her brothers.

Tal. (*Surveys him awhile, rises, and grasps his hand.*) I will.

Rath. The sooner the better.

Tal. She is in service.

Rath. Take her into your house.

Tal. Right, right! Your advice accords exactly with my feelings. She is poor, but virtuous, and I am told she possesses an enlightened mind.

Rath. Which she probably would not have possessed, had she been rich.

Tal. But what will the world say?

Rath. It will revere you.

Tal. Malice has already been industrious against me. Soltau's relations have always calumniated me.

Rath. Disappointment and envy made them do so. Did you not offer them a present of five thousand dollars?

Tal. I did, and they refused it. They would have all or nothing. They said that I had obtained the will by fraudulent means. Should I now do any thing for this girl—should I do much——

Rath. Has not every one witnessed the purity of your conduct during forty years? Does not the gratitude of many relieved by you from wretchedness speak for your heart? Dear sir, have confidence in yourself.

Tal. And if I act thus towards the girl, how am I acting towards my family?

Rath. If there be one of us, to whom your peace of mind is not dearer than wealth, that one does not deserve to be provided for.

Tal. (*After a pause.*) I'll send for the girl.—(*Lays his hand on Rath's shoulder.*) Have patience with me.

Rath. Your conscientious motives are a blessing to your children.

Tal. I shall not long trouble you.

Rath. Say not so, my father.

Enter Mrs. RATHING, with a bason.

Mrs. R. Good morning, dear father

Tal. God bless you, Maria!

Mrs. R. I have brought you some soup. I am so vain as to think that we make it more to your taste than at your own house.

Tal. I understand you, my child. (*Takes the bason and looks at them by turns.*) You do wrong in supporting my weak frame. (*They take his hat and stick, and he eats the soup.*) I thank you—I thank you. God knows I have ever wished to make my children happy. If I have not succeeded, it was an error—a mournful error, and no one suffers more for it than myself. God reward you, Maria! (*Returns the bason to her, takes his hat and stick, and shakes hands with them.*) Good morning. (*Mrs. Rathing kisses his hand.*)

Rath. We shall see each other again to-day.

Tal. Yes, but let it be here — — for here I feel my only peace. (*Draws a box from his pocket.*) This is a plaything for your children.

Mrs. R. I thank you. Will you not give it to them, before you go? I'll bring them hither in a moment.

Tal. No, Maria. My sorrowful countenance shall not damp their innocent enjoyments. Take it to them.—It is a palace, which they may put together,—Tell them it is

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my gift. (*Mrs. R. wipes her eyes.*) I must own I might have made a better choice.—A palace!—Return it to me. It is not proper. (*Takes the box again.*) I'll buy them a cottage instead of it. Teach them to find delight in a humble sphere. (*Kisses Mrs. R.*) Good morning! (*Shakes Rathings's hand.*) Good morning!

[*Exit, attended by them.*]

END OF ACT I.



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ACT II.

SCENE, *a Room in Talland's House.* Mrs. Rathing is discovered, seated at a Table.

Mrs. R. It is true that I am accustomed to patience, but Miss Bolfeld abuses it.—How much longer must I wait for her?

Enter HENRY.

Hen. Miss Bolfeld will come.

Mrs. R. Very well.

Hen. (*Bows and is going,—stops at the door—and returns.*) Alas, madam, what a house is this become? You know it, to be sure, in part,—but still it is worse than you believe.

Mrs. R. Be patient, Henry, be patient.

Hen. I don't think of myself, madam, but I am sorry for my poor master. No one knows what the old maid makes him endure, and no one knows why he endures it.

Mrs. R. Do every thing that you can for him.

Hen. That I will, but I can be of little service. Matters grow worse every day, and—only think, madam, she has lately sometimes locked herself in my master's study.

Mrs. R. You must tell him this.

Hen. Do you think so?—I am fearful, for her influence is unlimited.—To be sure I can't prove that she was guilty of any thing blamable—but what had she to do in the study?

[*Sees Lewis, and exit.*]

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. What has brought you hither?

Mrs. R. My wish to release you, if it be possible.

Lew. Release me! from what?

Mrs. R. From your thoughtless promise of marriage to Miss Bolfeld's niece.

Lew. What promise? The people are mad. I never thought of such a thing.

Mrs. R. Bolfeld asserts it.

Lew. And I deny it.

Mrs. R. I will speak to Miss Bolfeld on the subject. Her brother is very determined.

Lew. A blockhead! I marry his ugly green-eyed wench, forsooth!

Mrs. R. Heaven grant you may be able to avoid it.

Lew. Has his daughter any written promise?

Mrs. R. My husband is much distressed on your account.

Lew. I pay my court to Mr. Wehrman's sister, and never thought of the other creature.

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. Madam, I am very sorry that you have been obliged to wait, but really in such weather as this, one cannot sleep enough. I have a rheumatic pain in my shoulder too.—Be seated, I beg.—(*Sits.*)—Will you take a little breakfast with one—coffee—chocolate?

Mrs. R. I beg to be excused.

Lew. What will you give me, if I decline the offer too?

Miss B. I was speaking to your sister.—(To Mrs. R.)—So you will not have any thing? Well—Henry! My chocolate!—I am truly happy to see you Mrs. Rathing. How happens it?—Do you want any thing from our furniture?

Mrs. R. Nothing whatever.

Lew. Then you are welcome, no doubt. [Exit.

Miss B. Your brother is a hopeful youth, to be sure.—(Hen. brings the chocolate.)—Put it on the table.—Now bring the table hither.—Close to me.—There!—Now go.

[Exit Hen.

I don't know how you manage servants, Mrs. Rathing, but they are the plague of my life.—Well, in what can I serve you?

Mrs. R. Have the goodness to tell me, as far as you can, the relative situations of my brother and your niece.

Miss B. That he has promised to marry her.

Mrs. R. Do you really believe that?

Miss B. Most certainly.

Mrs. R. Do you think the connection proper?

Miss B. Why not?

Mrs. R. Even if your family were obliged to enforce it?

Miss B. Do you wish matters to go so far?

Mrs. R. At present I only wish to hear your opinion.

Miss B. Promises must be performed.

Mrs. R. But the alliance is not suitable.

Miss B. Not suitable! Let me tell you, madam, the Bolfelds are an honest family.

Mrs. R. That I do not deny.

Miss B. And as good as other people, who fancy themselves such mighty great folks.

Mrs. R. Miss Bolfeld!

Miss B. Yes, and they have upright hearts, let me tell you, and will not allow any body to behave ill to them. Do you understand me?

Mrs. R. You will not understand *me*.

Miss B. I'll tell you what, madam, I do understand you, and am not to be caught by your tricks.

Mrs. R.—(*Rises.*)—This is insufferable.

Miss B. So much the better. Why waste time in compliments? Tell your father, or the person who sent you, that the embassy has failed.

Mrs. R. Yet you subsist on my father's charity.

Miss B. I want no person's charity.

Mrs. R. Then leave the house, and do not abuse what you do not need.

Miss B. I am ready to go to-day, but ask your father if he will consent to it.

Mrs. R. I have no doubt of it.

Miss B. Try then—ask your father, madam.—Ha! Ha! Ha!—I stand on firm ground.

Mrs. R. Are you married to my father?

Miss B. Heaven forbid!

Mrs. R. Then I cannot comprehend—

Miss B. Any more than other people.

Mrs. R. Act as you please, but I assure you I will use every persuasion which can prevent this act of folly on the part of my brother.

Miss B. Folly! What do you mean—eh? What do you mean, I say? Who am I—who is my brother—who is my niece—and who are you, your father and your brother all taken together, that you dare call an alliance with my family an act of folly? [Exit Mrs. R.]

Miss B.—(*Follows her.*)—We are honest reputable people, and will teach your haughty family how to conduct itself even if we be ruined by it.—(*Returns.*)—An impertinent—proud—abusive woman!—(*Stamps violently.*)—But I'll be revenged.—(*Throws open the window.*)—Yes, madam, go home and tell your husband that I am a match for

him and twenty advocates.—I'll face him and a score like him I say.—(*Shuts the window.*)—She returns no answer. She is in too great a passion to speak. Well, I am glad I have made her more angry than myself. ——Attack me! I should like to see the person who can gain any thing by attacking me.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. Can I speak to Mr. Talland?

Miss B. No, he is not at home. What do you want with him?

Fre. He sent for me.

Miss B. Indeed! Every body says the same thing, who wants to partake of his purse.

Fre. I have no such wish.

Miss B. Who are you, then?

Fre. My name is Frederica Soltau.

Miss B. Indeed! Sure!—Frederica—

Fre. The name of Soltau must be familiar to you, madam, for my late uncle had a great regard for you.

Miss B. And I exhibited great fidelity in his service—so his regard was justified by my fidelity—was it not, pert miss?

Fre. Poor people are seldom pert, and that I am poor you know

Miss B. Your poverty is not my fault. I should not have cared if your uncle had left you his whole fortune.

Fre. Of that I do not wish to speak.

Miss B. Why did your father behave so ill that his brother, justly irritated, rather chose to leave his fortune to those, who acted properly, than to his relations? Mr. Talland compassionately offered you and the rest of you five thousand dollars, but you were too proud to accept it—so

now you are reduced to poverty. Thus it is—arrogance precedes a fall.

Fre. Very often.

Miss B. Where have your brothers strolled to?

Fre. They are dead.

Miss B. Then they are provided for. You are in mourning for the fellows, I suppose?

Fre. I am in mourning for my benefactors.

Miss B. How do you earn your bread?

Fre. By service.

Miss B. That's right. Be humble and submissive, and all may go well. Conduct yourself with propriety and modesty, and some honest footman may one day or other marry you.

Fre. I'll come again, if you please.

[*Going.*]

Miss Bol. No. Here is Mr. Talland.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. Who is this?

[*Fre. curtsies.*]

Miss B. Soltau's niece.

Tal. Welcome, welcome! Be seated.—(*Fre. declines it.*)
—Leave us, Miss Bolfeld.

Miss B. With your permission—it is more proper that I should stay.

Tal.—(*After a moment's reflection.*)—Perhaps it may.—
(*To Fre.*)—Your brothers are dead, and you have lost their support. I heard so good an account of you that I wish to supply their place. I have adjusted matters with the family in whose service you are, and you may now, if you please, remain with me.

Miss B. We want no more servants.

Tal. Remain in my house as the unfortunate and respected niece of my friend, whose place I have undertaken to sup-

ply. You have nothing to do here but to be as happy as I can wish you.

Fre.—(*Embarrassed.*)—Sir—

Miss B. A pretty offer on my conscience!

Fre. Sir, I feel your kindness,—and should rejoice at such an improvement in my situation—but the fear of being troublesome to you—makes me irresolute.

Miss B. A fine sum of money it would cost!

Tal. You will be a consolation not a trouble to me.

Fre. Though reduced to a lower sphere, I have not forgotten the sentiments created by my former rank and education, therefore—

Tal. You accept my proposal.

Miss B. Your parents were not in the best situation, methinks.

Tal. Peace! You are insufferable.

Fre. Rather than be obliged to endure humiliation while I receive a favour, I will return to my late service.

Tal. You shall remain with me, and if you please, have no concern with any one but me.

Fre. Your goodness affects me deeply. Such a man was worthy of my uncle's attachment. I reproach myself for any idea which I have hitherto harboured against you. When you entered, your look, your tone of voice at once dispelled the opinion I had formed of you.

Tal.—(*Takes her hand.*)—My dear child, I will—

Fre. Oh call me so.—(*Kisses his hand.*)—It is so long since I was addressed by that title—

Tal. I will—Fate has been unjust towards you.—(*Much affected.*)—I will repair this injustice.

Fre. With filial gratitude I accept your kind offer. Believe me I am incapable of abusing it.

Tal. I am sure you are. Arrange your concerns, and return as soon as possible.

Fre. Heaven reward you for the happiness you bestow!

Miss B. With permission—what am I?

Tal. My house-keeper.

Miss B. And when this beggar is admitted into the family, what shall I be?

Tal. My house-keeper.

Miss B. And what will she be?

Tal. What she pleases.

Miss B. And you really think of acting thus while I remain here?

Tal. I wish it.

Miss B. Then I'll tell you at once that if this girl dares to enter the house, I'll walk out of it.

Tal. What do you mean by this language? Have you forgotten that at Soltau's death, I took you into my service from mere kindness, when you were in want of a place?

Miss B. Ha! Ha! Ha! From mere kindness!—There was a little policy in it too.

Tal. Explain yourself.

Miss B. Not at present.

Tal. If you wish to end your days quietly, and to be provided for the purpose, I am ready—

Miss B. No, Sir. I know what I do. If you attempt to dismiss me from your house, you will find ——— what you don't expect.

Tal. What do you want?

Miss B. At present nothing but that this girl may remain where she has been.

Tal. That she shall not.

Miss B. You may allow her an annual gratuity

Tal. No. She shall not remain in service—positively she shall not.

Miss B.—(Smiling.)—Why are you so suddenly inclined to assist her?

Tal. Because she is unfortunate.

Miss B. That she has long been.

Tal. Never so much as now—now that she has lost her brothers—her only support.

Miss B. This is all nonsense. Play some other game. It is better to be candid and open.

Tal. I am so.

Miss B. No. If you were candid and open, I might reason with you, but as you will not be so, I now declare that I know you hate me, but that you find me necessary and useful to you. Act as you ought to do,—then you,—your children and I shall gain by your conduct. But if you think proper to treat me as a cypher, I give you notice that I'll do the utmost, rather than submit to it. I have told you my resolution—now act as you please. *[Exit.]*

Tal.—(*Stands some time, overpowered with agony, then raises his clasped hands.*)—Cursed—cursed moment!

Enter WEHRMAN.

Web. I only mean to detain you a few moments.

Tal. What procures me this visit.

Web. You probably know that your son has for some time paid his addresses to my sister.

Tal. Indeed I do not.

Web. Well! The young man may have been backward in telling you from a fear of not obtaining my consent. I am accustomed to doubt and suspicion from your family, but I wish to put you to the blush. Therefore, I am willing that the alliance shall take place, if—

Tal. I must candidly tell you that I am averse to all alliances, which can be so suddenly acceded to.

Web. But you, of course, will consent to—

Tal. Besides which, my son's fortune gives him no claim to a connection with a lady of such brilliant prospects.

Web. Why has he not a claim, while he has a father, who can advance a considerable sum for him?—

Tal. I can but advance his share of the interest of three thousand dollars—his mother's jointure.

Web. But it is known that Soltau's property—

Tal. With respect to that property, I shall act according to my own inclination.

Web. Can your inclination lead you to any thing detrimental to your children?

Tal. Every father and every owner of an estate has a right to act by conviction.

Web. I am sorry to be under the necessity of remarking that every one is astonished at your conduct towards your children.

Tal. My children know me and are satisfied. But is it not your opinion, Mr. Wehrman, that many people take great pains to make my children dissatisfied.

Web. I cannot be surprised if such be the case. No one can understand the motives for your conduct. You are thought harsh—opinions are circulated respecting you—

Tal. Of course, of course!

Web. Which are very singular, for—

Tal. Thus far———Mr. Wehrman, enough!

Web. As it seems, then, that you object to the union, I shall forbid any further intercourse between your son and my daughter.

Tal. That I request.

Web. Yet I think the father, who without paying any regard to the merit of the object, can even when old devote himself to love, ought not so absolutely to condemn this sensation in his son.

Tal. I beg no more may be said on this subject.

Web. At one time you took care that the world should say enough of me. Why am I now to be silent?

Tal. I only did my duty.

Web. And I am doing mine. I grant that revenge is the impulse by which I am guided. But even my revenge gives way, when I can promote the happiness of others. I do not like you, but even if I did, even if you had been my friend instead of my enemy, how could I act more properly than when I endeavour to procure for your children what is sacrificed to a harlot?—On her you squander your money, while your daughter wants the common necessities of life, and your son is the prey of usurers.

Tal. Is my son in debt?

Web. Of course. You compel him to be so.

Tal. I will relieve him as far as I can.

Web. That is the way to appease me.

Tal. Whose business is this, but our own? Who are you that you dare—

Web. A man—an injured man—one, who requires private satisfaction, or open war.

Tal. War you may find, disgraceful as it is on your part to enter the lists against an old man.

Web. Disgraceful! I thank you for the warning. I go to collect my forces, and shall return triumphant—till then all overtures of peace are needless.—(*Slowly walks to him, and says in a solemn tone*)—Mr. Talland, you are on every side surrounded. Think of an honourable capitulation.

[*Exit.*]

Tal. What an enemy have I created! Discontented with my own conduct, I became rigid against others, and now this rigour falls upon myself. What shall I do? What can I do?—Oh God, end my days—and soon—soon! — —

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. Have you sent for more beggars to inhabit the house?

Tal. What do you want?—(*Half aside.*)—In Hell there cannot be a greater torment.

Miss B. There's an old vagabond without, who has brought his bundle into the house as if he belonged to it.

Enter ELLOF.

Ell. Brother!—God bless you!

Miss B. Have you a brother?

Tal. Whom have I the honour—

Ell. There is very little honour in the case. I only wish there may be some pleasure.

Tal. Who are you?

Ell. Him, whom intimacy once induced you to call brother. I am grown old, yet surely you recollect me.—

Tal. I must own—

Ell. I do not read in your countenance a wish to know me.

Tal. But tell me—

Ell. That is what I did not wish, for when I have declared who I am, I shall probably be welcomed—for to-night. Well—well! I meant to reside here—but no matter! Instead of residence I shall have a night's lodging.—I beg pardon for reminding you of the term *brother*, and now introduce myself as your school-fellow. I am a fugitive—my name Ellof.

Tal.—(*Astonished.*)—Ellof!—Merciful Heavens!

Ell. Ellof, whom the sword and party-spirit have driven from his house.

Tal. My good—my worthy Ellof!

[*Presses him to his heart.*]

Miss B.—(*Aside.*)—Mercy on us! An emigrant!

Tal. How came you hither.

Ell. On foot, with little money, but much confidence.

“Talland,” thought I, “always had a regard for me. I’ll go, and if he be still alive, ask him for a bed. As for the rest, my head or my hands will procure it.” With this idea I tied my bundle, bad adieu to my plundered farm, and find—what?

Tal. A friend—a brother!

[*Embraces him.*]

Ell. God be praised! To him I consign the care of my flocks and fields, from which the enemy has driven me.—Your hand! I see the tear of joy in your eye.—I am happy.—Now introduce me to your wife.

Tal. I am a widower.

Ell.—(*Pointing to Miss B.*)—But—

Tal. Miss Bolfeld, my house-keeper.

Ell. Bolfeld—Bol——Zounds!—Catherine!—Yes!—Catherine Bolfeld! My old play-fellow! How are you? How are you?—You and I have often knocked our heads against each other at blind-man’s-buff.—(*Takes her hand.*)—Catherine! Catherine! You are grown old.

Miss B.—(*Drawing her hand away.*)—Sir—

Ell. Pshaw! Never mind that! I am grown old too. It is many years since we were children.—(*Takes a chair.*)—Well, comrade, how are you?

Tal. Old, very old.

Ell. Pshaw, pshaw! Though you are a widower, you have somebody to bind your temples when you have the head-ach. Eh, Catherine?

Miss B. Upon my word——Sir, I’d have you to know my reputation is not to be slandered. [Exit.

Tal. She is only my house-keeper.

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Ell. But one of the ruling sort, I suppose. When I entered the house, she addressed me with a voice as shrill as if she had whistled through a key-hole. I could not bear to have such a creature near me.

Tal. Custom.

Ell. How horrid are your looks! Cheer up, cheer up, friend!

Tal. I like you, Ellof.

Ell. But I don't like you.

Tal. Perhaps you may exhilarate me.

Ell. I who have left every thing behind me, am cheerful and merry, while you, who are a man of fortune, sink into despondency. Shame on you!

Tal. Come, let me shew you your chamber.

Ell. And a breakfast—

Tal. Of course.

Ell. But tell me—for I must know how to act—are you governed by this hag?

Tal. I am accommodating, from custom, and a love of peace.

Ell. That means I am grown very old. Should you like to be young again?

Tal. Alas, no, no, no.

Ell. Well—a breakfast I must have before I say any more. Hungry people are not fit for a consultation. Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter LEWIS and WEHRMAN.

Lew. How!—My father positively refused his consent to my marriage with your sister?

Web. Most positively.

Lew. Yet he is not apt to destroy the happiness of others. What reason did he assign for his refusal.

Web. None.

Lew. I must submit.

Web. That would I not.

Lew. But what can I do, without losing my own good opinion?

Web. Speak to him as your duty and his direct.

Lew. Can I mention his fortune without appearing to encroach upon his rights?

Web. Mention me. Say that I have made you aware of a conduct, which approaches towards disinherittance. Persist till you obtain some explanation.

Lew. It must be so. I will.

Web. Do not suffer the torpidity of your relatives to infect you. Establish your own fortune, and remove the obstructions, which surround the old man, that he himself may breathe more freely. You are one of the few, who do not misunderstand me. Attend to my advice. [*Exit.*]

Enter RATHING.

Rath. Has Mr. Wehrman been with you?

Lew. Yes.

Rath. Be on your guard.

Lew. Against my only friend?

Rath. Against the enemy of yourself,—of me,—of us all,—of himself.

Lew. Why do you think him our enemy?

Rath. Because his mind is incapable of understanding what is felt by such a heart as your father's. If you feel any filial affection, do not listen to Wehrman.

Lew. That no one may interrupt my father's obstinate determination to ruin me.

Rath. Brother—I do not love you less than I revere your father.—I cannot wish your ruin.—Let us rely on his pa-

rental feelings, and suffer not a third to interfere.—No good can result from it.

Lew. Speak more plainly.

Rath.—(After a pause.)—I dare not.

Lew. Why?

Rath. You see your father's strength of mind and body daily decay. Do you think a mere whim could effect this?

Lew. What else?

Rath. Revere his sorrows. The day may come when you would give the wealth of the whole world that you had not touched any string too violently.

Lew. What can I do?—Even if I be willing to sacrifice myself completely, what can I do to remove his melancholy?

Rath. Act as a son.

Lew. Have I ever acted otherwise?

Rath. It is a great title, and its tenderest duties are already in part neglected, when the mind begins to argue upon it without the heart being concerned.

Lew. Brother!

Rath. Son!

[*They embrace and exeunt.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT. III.

Scene.—*A Room in Talland's House. Lewis and Henry meet.*

Hen. I beg pardon, Mr. Lewis—are you going out?

Lew. Yes. Why do you ask?

Hen. Your father wishes to see you, sir.

Lew. Very well.—Who is the old gentleman I just now saw?

Hen. A Mr. Ellof.

Lew. What does he want here? Is he introduced by Miss Bolfeld?

Hen. God forbid, sir! No. She seems not very well pleased at his arrival.

Lew. Then he is doubtless an honest man.

Enter FREDERICA, somewhat better clothed than before, but still in a bumble dress.

Fre. Allow me, Mr. Lewis, to request your good-will and sympathy. Your father has promised me both, in the most generous manner, as you must have heard.

Lew. I have heard it with pleasure, and consider your abode in this house an auspicious omen. [Exit Hen.]

Fre. I understand this answer only as far as it claims my gratitude.

Lew. Inmates of one house should understand each other as soon as possible. Why should I conceal from you, what

you must have already in part observed? My father is old and infirm. A dragon has made this house her nest, and endeavours to banish his children from it. She will endeavour to procure your banishment too, if she observes any kind attentions on your part to the old man.

Fre. The unfortunate enjoy with gratitude the present moment, and leave futurity to Providence.

Lew. But Providence ordains that caution is a duty. I am naturally ingenuous, and I read something in that countenance, which would make me so, were I otherwise. Love my father. He deserves it more than I do—or rather he wants it more, for he is older than I am, though not more unfortunate. You have entered a wretched house.

Fre. Heaven forbid!

Lew. My helpless situation commands me to do what surprises even myself—it commands me to confide in you.

Fre. I cannot deserve this sudden confidence. Allow me time to fulfil one duty before I enter on another. Your father's kind disposition spared me all confusion—or at least greatly alleviated it. Imitate his example. The kinder he is the more attentive will I be, that I may thereby please his children. Be satisfied with this my good-will.

Lew. I am satisfied and ashamed of having commenced our acquaintance by an appeal of sorrow.

Fre. I did not wish you to think thus. Let us wait for a calmer moment, when we may, perhaps, understand each other better.

Lew. Shall I ever know a calm moment?

Fre. A feeling son may always find one in the arms of his father. You have justified the freedom with which I address you. Amidst the tempest of your soul, confide in the words of a stranger.

Lew. They are not the words of a stranger. Praised be Providence, for having conducted you to this house!

Fre. When, on a better acquaintance, I have restored your father's peace of mind, you yourself may decide what I can do towards your's. [Exit.

Lew. She must despise me. I despise myself. A weak woman has a better understanding—has more firmness and resolution than myself. I turn towards every side. A thousand wishes are contending in my bosom, and I cannot satisfy one of them. Oh I must—I must speak. My father gave being to this compound of desire and inability—and must assist me. It is his work—be it his care.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. I have, for some time, avoided all conversation with you, because all that a father could say, neither seemed to make you wiser, nor me easier. Finding, however, that you are now in a very critical situation I must once more attempt to direct you in your progress. Lewis, at what point do you aim?

Lew. Rather allow me to ask at what point you wish me to aim?

Tal. I wish you to become a reputable honest man; but while you thus waste time and money, how can you expect to support any reputation?

Lew. If you will allow that the fortunate state of your circumstances justifies me in considerable expectations, you cannot be surprised that I act in such a way as to establish for myself a proper rank in life.

Tal. I wish you happiness. Believe me, my son, I wish you happiness.

Lew. And yet refuse your consent to my marriage with Mr. Wehrman's sister?

Tal. Do you feel an affection for her?

Lew.—(*Shrugging his shoulders.*)—Does she for me? Does any woman of fashion know what affection is?—I like her. The match will make me of more consequence, and that, according to the present opinions of the world, is a great object.

Tal. Are you obliged to act according to the present opinions of the world on every occasion?

Lew. Was the world ever better?

Tal. Marriages were happier.

Lew. Let me hear your plan, my father.

Tal. You are in debt. To what amount?

Lew. Two thousand dollars.

Tal. Good God! [*Walks to and fro in great agitation.*]

Lew. My small salary—

Tal. Your expensive mode of life—your consummate vanity in associating with a class, to which you do not belong—

Lew. But surely according to your circumstances—

Tal. Circumstances! With a fortune of three thousand dollars, it is, no doubt, justifiable to contract debts amounting to two.

Lew. But the thirty thousand—

Tal. Don't belong to you.

Lew. At present certainly not, but—

Tal. Nor do they belong to me.

Lew. To whom, then? Pardon me. The question is natural.

Tal. It is.

Lew. I know that since this fortune was bequeathed to you, no use has been made of it—that you deprive yourself of the necessities of life, in order to gratify your benevolent propensities, without interfering with the estate. I lament this. I grieve to see my sister in such confined circumstances, and cannot think myself happy, as you will do

nothing for me, while I see the insolent creature who directs your household, revelling with your bounty.

Tal. You appear to have justice on your side, and I am sorry I cannot remove this appearance. But do not form a judgment according to it. I was many years a good father—be you a good son.

Lew. May I speak openly?

Tal. Do so, Lewis.

Lew. Relieve yourself from this unpleasant and uncertain situation. Bestow on this Miss Bolfeld decisive privileges rather than a dubious dangerous influence. Bestow on her your name.

Tal.—(*Throws himself into a chair, and covers his face.*)
—Not so, my son, not so.

Lew. I know no better counsel.

Tal.—(*Rises, embraces him, and then walks up and down for a short time.*)—Let us return to the subject. Lewis, notwithstanding the way in which you have hitherto lived, I still place such firm confidence in you, that at this moment my only hope of happiness depends upon you.

Lew. Speak—proceed.

Tal. You may refuse to do what I wish. It will be hard upon me, but never will I compel you even by arguments to do it. You may refuse this, I say,—but my command, my injunction—nay if you please—my petition never to repeat what I am about to say—you will not, cannot refuse.

Lew. You raise my expectations—

Tal. Give me your hand. Now, promise your father, whose trembling hand holds your's, that you never will repeat what I shall say.

Lew. I swear by—

Tal. Hold! Do not swear. Oaths are become the playthings of form. Give me an upright filial promise.

Lew.—(*Presses his father's band to his heart.*)—I do promise.

Tal. It is well.—(*Releases his band.*)—A moment—I am so much oppressed.—(*Draws his breath with difficulty.*)—Listen.—Soltau's property belongs to me according to his will,—but according to my conviction, it belongs to his relations

Lew. Did not those relations behave ill to him, when you acted as his sincere friend?

Tal. The father behaved ill—not the children. I ought never to have accepted this fortune, and cannot now return it to the person who ought to have it, without exposing myself to calumnious reports—yet I will not retain it. My children shall not have it.

Lew. That must be as you please.

Tal. You know the nature of my resolutions. One way still remains, by which you and your sister may obtain this fortune. Lewis, my son, it is in your power to bestow on your father peace of mind. This is a decisive moment. Accede to my wish, and I will a second time thank Heaven as fervently as I thanked it, when I first heard I had a son.

Lew. Proceed, I beseech you.

Tal. You have confessed your heart is not engaged, and you only want an establishment in life. Take half of the fortune—assign to your sister the remaining half—and obtain a right to both by marrying Soltau's lawful heiress.—Do not yet reply. You have seen her. She is handsome, and every word she utters, proclaims the goodness of her heart.—Answer me not till I have finished. Reflect that you may become the benefactor of your sister—of your father,—that you —— oh that I could find words to describe what blessings you will confer on me by this act! It will sweeten thy dying hour, Lewis, to have made thy father

so happy, so — — I can say no more.—Answer.—Give me life or death.

Lew. Dear father, can you doubt my readiness to obey this solemn injunction? But can you conceive that on me alone depends the power to obey it? How can your wish be represented to Miss Soltau, without conveying an appearance which must rather excite in her mind suspicions of injustice, than gratitude, for your kind intentions?

Tal.—(*Doubtfully.*)—Lewis.

Lew. Should she feel no attachment to me, will she not perceive on your part an absolute necessity—I use your own expression—to do her justice? What will be the consequence?—She will refuse me—make me the derision of the world—and not make you more easy.

Tal. Oh my son!

Lew.—(*With enthusiasm.*)—My brother-in-law has roused in my bosom the sensation of the duties attached to the name of son. Be assured that your blessing is far more valuable to your children than your wealth. Give Miss Soltau, therefore, without any conditions what you think you cannot justly withhold, and be happy.

Tal.—(*Taking his hand.*)—I am old and weak.—Let me reflect ere I decide.—

Lew. Allow me time, also, to try whether I am ever likely to obtain Miss Soltau's affections.

Tal. Be it so.—Take my blessing, Lewis—my blessing and my thanks.—There! [*Gives him a paper.*]

Lew. What is this?

Tal. An engagement that I will discharge your debts. I would not give it to you sooner, that you might not be induced to think I wished to bribe you. Send your creditors to me in the morning. Thanks to my economy, I can pay them from my own property.

Lew.—(*Falling at his feet.*)—Oh my father!

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Tal.—(*Raises him.*)—Rise.—My son, my friend, be silent. I dare not tell you all. Were I to confess all, you would both justify and condemn me. From the fear of condemnation, I dare not attempt to justify myself.—Lewis,—be silent. [*Exit.*

Lew. Rath is right. A mere whim cannot have such effect on any man.—I feel as if I had no sorrows of my own, while there is a chance of my having it in my power to alleviate his.

Enter RATHING.

Rath. Have you mentioned Bolfeld's claim upon you as to his daughter?

Lew. Who would think of the fellow for a moment?

Rath. He is waiting at my house for your answer.

Lew. He may go to the devil.

Rath. Lewis, this affair becomes serious. What promise did you make to these people?

Lew. I can swear with truth that I don't know—they made me drunk.

Rath. Have compassion on your father, and compromise the matter.

Lew. How can I? Bolfeld will not be satisfied but by a considerable sum of money. Let him bellow and bawl as usual. He cannot make my father alter the favourable sentiments of me, which he has even this moment avowed. No, no. I care not for him or that harridan his sister.

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. Who is a harridan, sir—ch?

Lew. She, who listens.

Rath. What do you want here?

Miss B. Nothing with you. I want to speak to Mr. Lewis.

Rath. Speak respectfully, or by Heaven you will repent it.

Miss B. I shall speak as I please. *Advocates* may give an opinion, but the decision rests with the judge.

Rath. Speak respectfully—I warn you for the last time.

Miss B.—(To *Lew.*)—Will you marry my niece, or not?

Lew. Never.

Miss B. Positively you will not?

Lew. Most positively never.

Miss B. Then our business is at an end.—(Curtseys.)—Your servant, gentlemen. Take my word for it, I'll teach you both to speak respectfully. Ha! Ha! Ha! [Exit.

Lew. Hell and furies! What means she?

Rath. The woman speaks in a tone of dreadful resolution.

Lew. Damnation! I'll follow her, and—

Rath. Hold! Be cool.

Lew. Once more I swear that, as far as I know, I never made a promise of marriage.

Rath. I must have time for reflection.—We will speak further on the subject soon.

Lew. But what will you—

Rath. For the present farewell. [Exit.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. Have the goodness, Mr. Lewis, to interfere between Miss Bölfeld, and the stranger who is here. Mr. Talland is in his own room, and I fear there will be a dispute.

Lew. I go immediately to prevent it. [Exit.

Fre. I will return to my lowly situation, for discord reigns in this house.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. My dear girl, I have been thinking that your abode here is not likely to be pleasant To-morrow I will take you to my daughter.

Fre. Your kindness knows no bounds.

Enter ELLOF.

Ell.—(*As he enters.*)—Damn the Jezabel! [*Exit Fre.*

Tal. Has any thing disagreeable happened to you?

Ell. Yes, and to your amiable house-keeper too, for your son, without saying a word, has handed her so gently out of doors, that I believe her limbs will not soon recover the concussion.

Tal. Where is she?

Ell. Lying in the street, and there let her lie.—Stop, I say—remain here:

Tal. What occasioned this commotion?

Ell. My pipe. I was smoaking in as peaceable a way as possible, and thinking of my poor farm, when into the room burst the dragon, and poured forth such a torrent of abuse as man never heard.

Tal. Ellof—pity me.

Ell. I do, but I'll not witness such misery any longer. I shall leave you to-morrow.

Tal. No, no, my friend.

Ell. Melancholy is infectious, and by degrees converts the firmest man into a mere child. Melancholy kills me. Mirth is my maxim.

Tal. Do you abandon me, because I cannot be cheerful?

Ell. Not because you cannot, but because you will not.—My good fellow, did I not know your excellent heart, I should think you had a bad conscience.

Tal.—(*Suddenly seizes his hand.*)—You must not leave me—Ellof—you must not leave me.

Ell. Will you be cheerful?

Tal. I have a great plan dependant on you.

Ell. Will you be cheerful?

Tal. Who can teach, and who can learn that art?

Ell. I and you. I'll give you an hour's lesson every day, over a bottle of wine. He, who when old, when robbed of all, can wander from his former home, and still support his spirits—he is the proper teacher of cheerfulness—and I am the man. Accept me as your preceptor.

Tal. Your intention is good, but—

Ell. The lesson is over a bottle of wine.

Tal. Alas! What can you do with me?

Ell. Why, I can make you drink with me. But come with me, at present, to your daughter, and think no more of the fallen Jezabel. Should she have the same fate as her predecessor—so much the better.—Come, come. When we return from your daughter, out comes the bottle of wine, and forthwith begin my instructions. You shall have a glass—and if you then behave ill—why, I'll empty the bottle.—Agreed! Agreed! Come! [*Drawing him away.*]

Tal. I am without a hat.

Ell.—(*Looks at him.*)—True.—(*Throws his own hat aside.*)—There—now we are alike. Come, come.

Tal.—(*Resisting.*)—But the people—

Ell. Pshaw! Confuse the people—something new, and our point is carried.

Enter Miss BOLFELD.

Miss B. Stop, I say. That monster—

Ell. Huzza! March! Huzza!

Miss B. He has behaved in such—

Ell. Huzza! Huzza! *Vive la joie! Vive l' allegresse!*

[Exit, leading Tal.]

Miss B. That ever I was born to endure such conduct!—
Thrown down half a dozen steps into the street!—But their
triumph shall be short.—I'll be revenged.

Enter BOLFELD.

Bol. Well, what have you done? Here have I been exerting myself in every quarter, and not one proceeding do I know on your part that is likely to produce any profit.

Miss B. Be at ease. Half of old Soltau's property must be our's—one way or other.

Bol. One way or other! Pshaw! Nonsense. You have been talking in that silly way for half a year, and we seem no nearer the mark. I verily believe I shall some night hear you knock at my door after having been kicked out of the house without a farthing.

Miss B. Heaven defend me! Mr. Lewis has made a beginning, for he kicked me out of doors just now.

Bol. A pretty way of treating his future aunt!

Miss B. His aunt I will be, too. I go on certain grounds.

Bol. I advise you to do so. I am not to pay for Champagne in order to intoxicate the fellow, and then have no reward. I have made an attack on Rathing, but it did not succeed. What's to be done now?

Miss B. Attack the old man.

Bol. But if I alarm him too much, he may die without a will.

Miss B. Never fear. He has as many lives as a cat.—Attack him I say, and bellow without mercy. Depend upon it that before sun-set I will be at your house with half the fortune—for half I will have. Now go to the old man, and insist on the marriage.

Bol. May I be loud?

Miss B. The louder the better.

Bol. And if he will not consent—

Miss B. Then he shall hear *my* thunder, and that will end the matter.

Bol. Are you sure of that? For if you should come without money—damnation—

Miss B. I tell you again most positively that before evening I will bring you half of old Soltau's fortune.

Bol. Well, then, wherever I find old Talland,—it matters not whether in house or street,—I'll bawl till — —

Miss B. Go, then, and find him. [Exeunt.

END OF ACT III.

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ACT IV.

Scene.—*A Room in Talland's House.*

Enter TALLAND and ELLOF, hastily.

Tal.—(*In great agitation and much exhausted.*)—This is too much. [*Throws himself into a chair.*]

Ell. But who is the fellow, that had the impudence to attack you thus in the street?

Tal. Bolfeld—my house-keeper's brother.

Ell. The scoundrel!

Tal. To address me thus!

Ell. I wish you would have allowed me to make him feel my stick.

Tal. And my son too! What can the mad-man mean by forming a connection with such a creature?—(*Rises.*)—Go, go, my friend. Leave me. Why waste your life with one, whose sorrows daily increase?

Ell. I will assist you, my friend. You are irritable.—Compose yourself and procure me a conversation with your son. All will yet end well.

Tal. Alas! How is that possible?

Ell. Never despair. He who gives way to melancholy, can never succeed in any thing. Cheer up, and while I am settling matters with your son—talk to your house-keeper. Act as her master. Abolish the ascendancy she has gained over you. It matters not how it was acquired—destroyed

it must be.—Delays are dangerous—I'll tell the servant to send her hither. Talland—act like a man. [Exit.

Tal. He is right.—Yes.—I'll destroy this growing evil.—I'll learn my situation—I'll learn what she knows—what she does not know.——She comes.

Enter Miss BOLFELD.

Miss B. What are your commands?

Tal. Deceitful ungrateful woman!

Miss B. It would be better for you, if you could end with such words instead of beginning with them.

Tal. Thou torment of my life!

Miss B. How can so indifferent a person be able to torment you?

Tal. Because my impolitic kindness—

Miss B. If it seems to you more politic—dismiss me.

Tal. I do. You shall leave my house to-day.

Miss B. With all my heart.

Tal. Your wages you shall receive for life.

Miss B. I want no wages.

Tal. As you please.

Miss B. I have other pretensions. If you refuse them—

Tal. What pretensions?

Miss B. I have my opinion respecting certain transactions.

Tal. If you mean to refer to my son's conduct, I positively tell you he shall not marry your niece.

Miss B. Then I have done.

[Going.

Tal. Hold! your brother and you do not wish this connection to take place. I plainly see that money is your object. You surround me on every side in order that you may extort money from me. If there be any spark of humanity in you, sell me the repose I want. I will purchase repose.—

I am old and cannot long enjoy it—therefore do not value it at too high a rate.

Miss B. Now you talk rationally.

Tal. How much, do you think, will satisfy your brother and provide for you?

Miss B. What are you disposed to give?

Tal.—(After a pause.)—Two thousand dollars.

Miss B. That is nothing.

Tal. I am obliged to pay my son's debts.

Miss B. Soltau left you thirty thousand dollars.

Tal.—(With terrific violence.)—Damned be—(Walks up and down, endeavouring to compose himself.)

Miss B. That I believe.

Tal. What mean you, then? How far do your diabolical plans extend? How much do you require?

Miss B. Half.

Tal. Of what?

Miss B. Of the thirty thousand.

Tal. Begone!—Out of my house!—Begone!

Miss B. I will not.—Compose yourself, and listen, for the period is arrived, when it becomes us both to declare our sentiments openly. Every one has an end in view. You had one and obtained it. At that time I formed one too. Had you engaged me in your plan, you might have lived more comfortably. Mine is fixed. If you will let me share your prize with you, I am satisfied—if not, we shall, it is true, neither of us obtain any thing, but you have more to lose than myself. I believe you perfectly understand me.

Tal. Hear me.—We are both old. I daily grow more infirm. Let us both face death with a good conscience. From the fortune which I possessed before Soltau's death, I have, by rigid economy, saved seven thousand dollars. Of this I can dispose. With two thousand I can pay my son's

debts. The same sum will I give to my daughter, and the remaining three thousand to you.

Miss B. And who is to have the thirty thousand?

Tal. None of us. I have made a vow that it shall devolve to my friend's nearest relation—Frederica Soltau.

Miss B. Indeed!—Strange enough!

Tal. Take the three thousand dollars and remain with me. Make this act easier to me—for you must feel it is a good act. I will forget what you have done to displease me, and you will cause me to die in peace. Grant what I ask—I ask but little of you—and yet to me it is much. Can one fellow-creature refuse another, when he asks no more?

Miss B. Let the girl have the three thousand, and us twelve.—(*Tal. clasps his hands together with violence.*)—Then I shall be satisfied.

Tal.—(*After a pause.*)—I have made a vow.

Miss B. So have I.

Tal. Go, go. I have nothing more to say.

Miss B. Are you serious?

Tal. I am.

Miss B. You will not agree to my proposal?

Tal. No.—(*Firmly.*)—No.

Miss B.—(*After a pause.*)—Reflect.—(*Tal. beckons to her to go.*)—Shall I go?—(*Tal. turns away.*)—Shall I go? Are you resolved?

Tal. God will assist me!

Miss B. You may assist yourself.

Tal.—(*With coldness and contempt.*)—Go.

Miss B.—(*Approaches, and endeavours in vain to catch his eye—then in a furious and determined tone.*)—I will go.

[*Exit.*]

Tal.—(*Walks up and down.*)—Honour!—Alas!—What speaks here—(*Laying his hand on his breast*)—is more.—For my honour I can now do nothing. What can I do for my

conscience?—(*Casts his eyes in gloomy despair on the earth.*)
 —Thou end of human pain and sorrow, welcome! Wel-
 come, death.—(*Raises his eyes slowly towards Heaven.*)—
 Almighty Judge, be merciful, if misery and despair lead
 me into the arms of my last friend.

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. Mr. Ellof has spoken to me.

Tal. What do you want?

Lew. Be at ease with respect to Bolfeld's ridiculous de-
 mand.

Tal. It is dreadful.

Lew. One evening, he intoxicated me, and I know not
 what I said. I am ignorant of any promise, and will swear
 that I am so.

Tal. To-day you will receive the money for your cre-
 ditors.

Lew. With respect to what you mentioned as your wish—

Tal. My dear son, I fear my wish was not mentioned 'till
 too late. At present I am afflicted by other matters.
 Leave me.

Lew. Oh, there comes my brother-in-law. [*Exit.*]

Enter RATHING.

Tal. What do you want, my son?

Rath. Dear sir, your happiness is the sole object of my
 pursuits. Your sorrow increases every hour. Disclose to
 me the cause of it.

Tal. I acknowledge your good intentions, but—

Rath. Some uncommon burden hangs upon your mind.
 If, from the delicacy of your feelings, you reproach yourself

in any degree, do yourself justice—look back upon the list of your good deeds—and find repose.

Tal.—(*Takes his hand.*)—In the afternoon I'll come to you, and converse with you on several subjects. This is not the time, my son.

Rath. I cannot bear that you should be seen in a false light.

Tal.—(*Sighs.*)—It must be borne.

Rath. You know that I have always feared Mr. Wehrman more than respected him. He is not your friend, and I am sorry to say he even speaks against you to your daughter.

Tal. At three o'clock I'll be with you. No more, I do beseech you. I must be left alone in order to compose myself. Good morning.

[*Tal. throws himself in a chair. Rath. bows and exit.*]

Enter ELLOF.

Ell. Friend, be at ease, with respect to your son. If Bolfeld should think proper to appear here again, he shall soon be taught where the door lies, and his gentle sister—

Tal. She is resolved to leave me.

Ell. Bravo! Then peace will take her place.

Tal. Alas, no. I am oppressed by a burden, which cannot be removed.

Ell. Where does it lie?

Tal.—(*Lays his hand on his heart.*)—Here—here it has lain for years.

Ell. Disclose the nature of it.

Tal. I cannot.

Ell. Look at me stedfastly. Talland, many a person has found consolation by confiding in me. I can compre-

hend sorrow, endure it, and remove it.—(Tal. *throws himself into his arms.*)—Right, my friend.

Tal.—(Gazes at him.)—Ellof, when you have cast a look into the horrible abyss—you will start back, and leave me for ever.

Ell.—(With firmness.)—I will not.—If you have ever forgotten yourself for a moment—

Tal. I have—I have—and this moment has been followed by years of misery—yet still—still does my burden become heavier.

Ell. Then bear it not alone—let me share it or remove it. Were your house on fire, would you shut the door against your neighbour, who offers his assistance?

Tal. No. You shall know my secret. It is better to sink in the opinion of my friend, than of my children.

Ell. I can be silent, and may Heaven rob me of my cheerful disposition if I be not!

Tal. On that condition I begin. Old Soltau was my bosom-friend. He hated his relations, for they behaved infamously to him. Several years previous to his death, he bequeathed his whole fortune to me. This he afterwards repented, and three days before his death he made a second will. He placed—oh look more mildly at me—he placed so much confidence in me that he employed me as his notary to prepare the will, and after signing it, deposited it in my hands.—(Strikes his breast.)—One moment!—

[Leans on Ell.

Ell. Cheer up, my friend. I know mankind.

Tal. Oh God, God!—By this second will he left his whole fortune to his relations, except a legacy to me. I never was covetous, but had rejoiced at the prospect of this fortune, from sincere affection to my children. For years I had been accustomed to consider it my own. The idea that my children would lose it was insufferable.—Parental affec-

tion misled me—I—(*Covers his face.*)—I cannot proceed.

Ell. You concealed the second will.

Tal. And produced the first.

Ell. And thus became possessed of the property. I have heard the nature of your crime, and your present looks sufficiently proclaim your painful penitence.

Tal. In motion or on my pillow, the image of my dying friend appears before me. Every shadow which I see, every voice which I hear calls on me for retribution. My conscience accuses me, my eyes betray me, and every one who looks keenly at me seems to condemn me. My punishment is every day new—every day more dreadful.—God have mercy on me—I can no more—

Ell. Unhappy man, retain no longer the cause of your torments.

Tal. Soltau's relations traduced my character.—Shame would not allow me to give up the whole fortune, and they refused to accept a part.—Never have I used any part of it, and at my death it shall devolve to the lawful heiress.

Ell. Right, my friend! All will, then, be properly settled. Your penitence will be complete.

Tal. This Miss Bolfeld was Soltau's house-keeper. She may, perhaps, suspect that a second will was made—nay, she may even know it. For this reason I took the monster into my family. She long conceived that my evil conscience would induce me to marry her, but finding this a fruitless hope, she began to tyrannize over me by oblique allusions to my guilt. I have been in a continued state of alarming uncertainty, but this uncertainty she has to-day removed by expressly demanding half of Soltau's property,—or—

Ell. Or what?

Tal. She did not complete her threat, but a perfect knowledge of her character makes me sure she will proceed to the utmost.

Ell. Unfortunate friend!

Tal. I am lost. I would not repine at that, but my children—my children!

Ell. Is she covetous?

Tal. Very covetous—and her brother still more so.

Ell. You are, at all events, resolved that the lawful heir-ess shall have the fortune.

Tal. Most positively.

Ell. Then you need not any longer torment yourself. Of course you have destroyed the second will.

Tal. No. It is still in my possession.

Ell. Away with it!

Tal. Often have I had it in my hands with the intention of burning it, but—I saw the signature of my late friend—I felt his unsuspecting confidence in me—I remembered that he died in my arms—I shuddered at the idea of what I had done, and fancied that by destroying the will I was, a second time, committing the crime. The will fell from my hands, and with tears of agony I knelt near it and prayed.—It is still in my possession.

Ell. It must be destroyed—this very day. Allow me a quarter of an hour's reflection, that I may determine how we should act towards this house-keeper.

Tal. You despise me.

Ell. Talland, the tempter has thrown you down, but you have valiantly fought against him 'till you have placed your foot upon his neck.—

Tal. I am prepared for all that may occur, and strive not against the decision of just Fate. But my children, my children! That I, who erred through sincere affection for them—that I should brand them with infamy—

Ell. Fear not that. You are not lost. Exert yourself, and follow my directions.

Tal. Nothing can now retrieve me. Oh conscience, conscience, thou robbest the soul of every faculty, and consumest the very marrow in our bones. [*Exit, led by Ell.*]

Enter MISS BOLFIELD from the opposite side.

Miss B. So, Mr. Talland!—The lawful heiress is to have the property! Then have I lost all chance. No.—After ten years expectation, I will not.

Enter WEHRMAN.

Web. Is Mr. Lewis at home?

Miss B. I don't know.

Web. It is well that I find you here. Mark me. If your brother dares to utter another syllable relative to the marriage with his daughter, I'll talk to the fellow in a way he will not like.

Miss B.—(*In a tone of defiance.*)—Let me tell you, sir, we are not so easily alarmed.

Web. Indeed!—Then I may perhaps begin with you.

Miss B.—(*Astonished.*)—Me!

Web. You were in Soltau's house and attended him during his last illness. You will be very seriously interrogated as to what you know;—but if you will place confidence in me, you may find it to your advantage.

Miss B. I shall not listen to any such proposal, mighty sir.

Web. As you like. I don't want your assistance. When the flame mounts, you probably will feel that it burns. Where is the new boarder?

Miss B. Boarder!

Web. Yes—who from well-calculated economical compassion has been taken into the House.

Miss B. You mean Miss Soltau, then?

Weh. I do, and I mean that she may become very rich if instructed how to act. [Exit.

Miss B. Mercy on me!—The whole face of circumstances has undergone a change. Must I, then, lose every thing?—*(A pause.)*—Every thing!—No.—No.—I'll lose nothing. One person still remains, through whom I am certain to succeed. Henry!

Enter HENRY.

Beg Miss Soltau to come hither.—*(Exit Hen.)*—You, Mr. Ellof, may reflect, and you, Mr. Wehrman, may commence a law-suit. I'll outwit you both. You shall soon see whether your wisdom or my cunning is most effective.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. What can you want with me?

Miss B. I want to strike a bargain with you. Heaven has appointed me to be the means of bestowing happiness upon you.

Fre. How am I to understand this?

Miss B. Come with me to my chamber that we may not be interrupted. Heaven provides most miraculously for you.

Fre. Through you?

Miss B. Through me. Be grateful to God, and reward his agent that I may pass reputably through life. [Exeunt.

Enter TALLAND and ELLOF.

Tal. There she goes.—*(He has a pistol in his hand, and attempts to follow her.)*—All is lost.

Ell. Hold! She is not alone.—*(Looks through the door.)*—She goes down the gallery—and enters a chamber.

Tal. God of Heaven!—Let me pass.

Ell. Hold, I say. Is your servant honest?

Tal. I dare be sworn he is.

Ell. Talk to him with composure—tell him some accounts are missing—but with composure, I say, or all is lost. Go. I'll wait here 'till you return.

Tal. She has the will.—(*Wipes his forehead.*)—The agonies of death are on me.

Ell. Talland, on your instant composure depends *every thing*—(*Exit. Tal.*)—I never was in such a situation. Assist me, invention, that I may save my friend.—No.—My mind is dark and clouded.—(*Suddenly.*)—How if I—
No.—I must not do any thing. He must act. Surprise may gain the point—it is too late to compromise.—It must be so.—By this method we shall be rid of the brother.—But if she—that matters not. There is no other resource.

Re-enter TALLAND.

Tal.—(*Rushes with open arms towards Ell.*)—She has it.

Ell. Are you certain?

Tal. She has locked herself more than once in my study.

Ell. Summon your resolution. Seek her—speak to her—seize her—and place the pistol to her breast. She is not accustomed to resolution from you. Terror may effect much.

Tal. And if she declares she has taken no paper, how dare I make a reference to the will?

Ell. She was locked in your study, and this justifies search. While you are speaking to her, Henry and I will open her chests and make strict examination.

Tal. And if the will be in her brother's hands—

Ell. Then we have no recourse, but bribery. The Bolfeld's must have half—Miss Soltau half.—Come! No more delay. Henry shall lead me to her room.—I see her coming.

[*Exit.*

*Enter MISS BOLFELD and FREDERICA from one side—
WEHRMAN from the other.*

Web. Where is Miss Soltau, Mr. Talland?

Tal. This is Miss Soltau [Fre. curtsies.

Web. She lives here at present, I am told.

Tal. She does.

Web. Madam, I feel a sincere interest in your uncommon fate.

Tal. This, Miss Soltau, is Mr. Wehrman.

Web. Be so good as to inform me, sir, what this lady's fortune is.

Fre. Sir, I have no fortune.

Web. As far as you know.

Tal. Have you any further knowledge?

Web. Perhaps I have. I have to communicate some very agreeable prospects to the lady, and shall be happy if she will, for that purpose, accompany me to my sister.

Tal. Do you accept this invitation, Miss Soltau?

Fre.—(To Web.)—I am grateful for your kindness, sir, but no good fortune can happen to me, which I should not be more pleased to hear in the presence of my benefactor than in any other place.

Web. As you please.—(To Tal.)—At present, therefore, you and I share the good intentions towards this lady. How happy would it make us, if you and I could discover that she is entitled to a fortune!—(To Fre.)—I have therefore only to warn you against any agreement or compromise. You shall soon know what are your pretensions.—

[Bows and exit.

Tal.—(To Fre.)—Leave us awhile, my good girl.—(Exit

Fre.—Miss B. is following her.)—A word with you.

Miss B. I must speak to Miss Soltau.

Tal.—(*Resolutely.*)—You shall not.

Miss B. What do you want?

Tal.—(*Locks the doors.*)—Confess.

Miss B. What?

Tal. You have been in my study.

Miss B. Sir—

Tal. You have opened my desk.

Miss B. Shall I speak in another tone?

Tal. It is in vain. Your last hour is come, if you do not confess.

Miss B. If you have a bad conscience, that is not my case.

Tal.—(*Holds the pistol to her breast.*)—The papers!

Miss B.—(*Alarmed beyond all measure.*)—Merciful God!

Tal. May he be merciful to me for having deprived thee of life—if thou dost not confess.

Miss B. Help!

Tal. Utter another word, and it shall be thy last. This murder would be pardonable, compared with all the misery and infamy, which for years thy malice has heaped upon me. Not all my patience, not all my kindness and generosity, not all the sums which I withheld from my children and lavished upon thee could ever make thee so humane as to grant me one moment's comfort.—Now expect no compassion—no mercy.—Vengeance, vengeance for all the torments thou hast inflicted upon me!—Hast thou stolen the papers?—Confess, or this moment thou diest.

Miss B. Mercy! Mercy!—I did take a paper.

Tal. This instant restore it.

Miss B. Oh Heavens! I no longer have it

Tal.—(*Cocks the pistol.*)—Who has it?

Miss B. Miss Soltau.

Tal. How long has she had it?

Miss B. Only a few minutes.—(*A knock his heard at the door.*)—When I found that you would dismiss me without any reward—

[*The knock is repeated.*]

Tal. Not another syllable! You are my prisoner.

Bolfeld.—(*Without.*)—Is nobody here?

Miss B. Yes, brother, yes.

Tal.—(*To Miss B.*)—Go into the next room, instantly.

Miss B. Burst the door open. Help! Help!

Tal.—(*Puts the pistol in his pocket and opens the door.*)

Enter BOLFELD.

Bol. What has happened here?

Miss B. He held a pistol to my breast.

Bol. Damnation! I'll go to a magistrate.

Miss B. Take me with you, brother.

Tal. She shall not move from the spot.

Bol. But I say she shall go with me, and he who attempts to detain her—

Tal.—(*In a tone of stupefaction and despair.*)—True. She may go, and act as she pleases. I am tired of interfering with her conduct.

Miss B. Now we shall see whose life is in danger. Your's, I rather think, sir.

[*Exeunt Bol. and Miss B.*]

Enter ELLOF, from the other side.

Ell. Whither is she going?

Tal. She is gone to publish my infamy. All is inevitably lost. Miss Soltau is already in possession of the will.

Ell. But don't let this woman go. [Going.]

Tal.—(*Detains him.*)—Leave every thing to Heaven.—My hour is come.—(*Draws the pistol hastily from his pocket and attempts to shoot himself.*)

Ell.—(*Seizes his arm.*)—Man!

Tal. Release me—I can endure no more—Cruel man, let me put an end to my sufferings.—(*Endeavours to release himself.*)—Despair is stronger than friendship.

Ell. Help! Henry! Henry!

Enter on one side, HENRY, and on the other MR. and MRS. RATHING.

Hen. For Heaven's sake.—(*Seizes Tal.'s right arm, and wrests the pistol from his hand.*)—Dear worthy sir—

Rath. What has happened?

Mrs. R. Dear father!

Tal. Oh that you had a father!—Go, Maria. You are a poor forsaken orphan.

Mrs. R. Say not so, dearest father.

Tal. Mention not that name—and look not thus at me. There is peace and virtue in your looks—I cannot bear them.

Ell. Compose yourself, friend. Go, Henry. [*Exit Hen.*]

Tal. You cannot now assist me. Farewell, Maria—embrace me.—(*Presses her in his arms then pushes her gently from him.*)—And now forget me—forget me, all of you.

Mrs. R. Oh may God forget me, if I do not love you with the same affection that I always felt for you!

Tal. That was not sufficient for me. I regarded not the costly blessing, and have brought infamy upon my children. Forgive me, Maria. You are poor—you are deprived of wealth and reputation—I have plundered you.—(*Takes her hand.*)—Forgive me.

Mrs. R. Oh that I could allay the tempest, which rages in this breast! [*Lays her hand on his heart.*]

Tal. That you cannot.—No one can—no one shall.—The form—the dying man—his breaking eye——Do not

look at me, Maria—thus he looked at me—thus my hand lay on his breast—(*Puts Mrs. R.'s hand aside*)—when I pledged to him—Away! Away!—His lips are closed—but every figure which I see proclaims his dying will.

Rath. I conjure you by all that is dear to you—

Tal. Here it is hidden—(*Beating his breast.*)—here—here—deep below his will is hidden—it has been hidden fourteen years—air—air—air—my heart will break—give me air.

Mrs. R. Father! Father!

Rath. For Heaven's sake—

Ell. Rouse yourself.

Tal. The angel of the Almighty has opened the tribunal.—The world is summoned—I am condemned—my children declared infamous—through *me*.—Curse me not.—Grant me—(*Sinks on his knees before his daughter*)—grant me thy pity—I beseech thee—(*Falls back in a swoon. They catch him in their arms.*)

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene.—*The Same.* Enter LEWIS and WEHRMAN.

Web. What means this sudden alteration in the house?
No one is to be seen.

Lew. I cannot understand it.

Web. Indeed. But I can—and have long understood it.
—Who could have thought that a man with so bad a conscience would be the first to place others in a disgraceful light? But for your father's conduct, I should now have been at the top of preferment. For years I have used every possible effort that I might be able to gain public satisfaction for the public disgrace he brought upon me. The wished-for moment is arrived, and I will not let it pass without availing myself of it.

Lew. Is this your friendship? Would you try to ruin the father of your friend?

Web. He is my enemy, and I am only doing an act of justice. Soltau's fortune must be transferred to the lawful heiress. It is evident that the will by which your father obtained it, was a false one.

Lew. Dare you attempt—

Web. I every moment perceive more palpably that the attempt is not daring. As for you—of course there is an end to the connection between you and my sister; but I will, nevertheless, assist you in your pursuits.

Lew. And if the worst were true, how will you act towards my father?

Web. The only means of persuading me not to make his crime public, will be to confess to me that he is as guilty as he wished to make me appear in the eyes of the world—but he must throw himself entirely upon my mercy.

Lew. You are a monster. I despise myself for listening to you.

Web. You feel as a son ought to feel, but remember your father's situation makes it necessary that you should beware of using illiberal language to me.

Lew. My father cannot be what you describe.

Web. Come with me to your room, and I will communicate the proofs to you.—But, however, you are young, and may, perhaps, gain the affections of this Miss Soltau, by which you will become possessed of the whole fortune, and can support your relations.

Lew. Spare your humiliating counsel, and have compassion on my father.

Web. I have observed his conduct with a watchful eye so long, that I sink under the foolish weakness of feeling pity for him. I promise to conceal his error from the world, but only on condition of being allowed to convince him that it is in my power to retaliate upon him.

Lew. The son must be silent, but at least avoid the family for the present, and let me speak to you as a friend.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MR. and MRS. RATHING and ELLOF.

Mrs. R. Alas, I have no hope. My father is lost to the world and us.

Rath. Compose yourself, Maria.

Ell. I must own the attack is severe, but this might naturally be expected. That a secret, on which his character depends, should be brought to light after having been con-

cealed in his own breast for so many years,—that his sincere repentance may not be so well known as his crime—all this must affect him deeply. But, thank Heaven, the storm is over. He must now seek repose elsewhere.

Rath. Undoubtedly. He must see the inhabitants of this place as little as possible.

Ell. He must prevail upon himself to appear once more among them—and then away! I will accompany him.

Mrs. R. But what is to be done here? Miss Soltau has the will.

Ell. Perhaps it is not yet opened.

Mrs. R. And the Bolfelds! What—

Ell. With them nothing but money will avail. Go, my dear sir, and send Bolfeld to me.

Rath. Offer what you please. We wish for no parental inheritance if a father's peace can be purchased with it.

Mrs. R. Dearest William! [Embraces him.]

Ell. Right!—Lewis must undertake to silence Wehrman—I'll direct this. But that he may not form a combination with Bolfeld, send the avaricious bully hither instantly. You, Madam, must attend to your father—but at present let him sleep. I will have an immediate conversation with Miss Soltau, after which I shall be ready for Bolfeld.

Mrs. R. Heaven reward you, sir, for the interest you feel—

Ell. Not another word—and not another tear! For the crime which has been committed torrents of tears have already been shed.—*(Takes their hands.)*—Courage, my friends! All may yet end well. Go, go.—*(Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. R.)*—Wehrman! Wehrman!—Alas! There hangs the cloud which threatens to destroy my plans.

Enter LEWIS, much agitated.

Lew. Where is my father?

Ell. In his room, but how long he will remain there—or can remain there, I know not.

Lew. God of Heaven!

Ell. What will you do for him?

Lew. Every thing that man can do.—Who will advise me—

Ell. I will.

Lew. Is it true then that the will—

Ell. It is true.

Lew. That my father's honour—

Ell. Young man, I admire your feeling, but recollect that he, who exposed himself to danger for your sake, ought not to be deprived of honour in your eyes.

Lew. Can you imagine I condemn him?

Ell.—(*Takes his hand.*)—Henceforth I shall not imagine you capable of it.—As for honour, if you chuse to gain it by filial exertion, I'll be your instructor.

Lew. I am astonished that a stranger—

Ell. Congenial minds are not strangers to each other.

Lew. Oh speak then. What must be done?

Ell.—(*Lays his hand on Lewis's breast.*)—This must tell you.

Lew.—(*Resolutely.*)—Frederica shall have the fortune.

Ell. Right!

Lew. But I fear it will be difficult to silence Wehrman.

Ell. That you must attempt, your father's distress urges this implacable man to prove his suspicions by force; and such conduct has as great, perhaps a greater effect on a suf-

fering penitent than absolute proof would have upon a hardened villain.

Lew. He will conceal the circumstance from the world, if my father will confess all to him in private.

Ell. Such a demand will kill your father.

Lew. All petitions are in vain.

Ell. Then only one expedient remains. The laws forbid it, but filial affection, roused to the utmost by despair, justifies it.

Lew. I understand you, and my sensations anticipated your sentiments; but the fear of doing any thing which might draw the attention of the public to my father, deterred me. Now, however, when you urge it— [Going.]

Ell. Yet hold!—You are right.—Another way is still open to us. Falsehood must aid where truth cannot prevail. Be ready to maintain every thing I propose—every thing I say of you.

Lew. I do not comprehend you.

Ell. Time is precious. Send Wehrman to me.

Lew. I place my father's fate in your hands.

Ell. Some one comes.—Send Wehrman hither. [Exit Lew.]

Enter FREDERICA.

Miss Soltau, I am a friend of this family. At my age, a man may be supposed to have obtained some knowledge of the world. I wish for your confidence, and time will not permit me to say more than that you shall find me worthy of it.

Fre. After having witnessed your conduct, sir, since I came to this house, I willingly grant it—nay, came hither to ask your advice.

Ell. That you shall have. Providence has placed you in a critical situation. You have received a paper. Was it open, when you received it?

Fre. It was.

Ell. Have you read it?

Fre. I have.

Ell. And how mean you to act?

Fre. In such a manner as to injure no one. Oh, instruct my inexperienced youth, and tell me how I can be of any service to Mr. Talland.

Ell. I perceive you are worthy of the fortune, which must fall to you. But hear me. As God shall judge me, Talland had determined that you should have it before he took you into his house.

Fre. Oh, I willingly believe it. Your word, and the kindness with which he sought me, are sufficient proofs. I am still more indebted to him than I thought. His children shall not be deprived of all.

Ell. Good girl!—Bolfeld may, I think, be bribed, but the suspicions of Wehrman—

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. Mr. Ellof, my father wants you.

Ell. Will you consent to appear ignorant of all that has happened, and to accept the whole fortune as a present from Talland?

Fre. I will.—

Ell. We must lose no time. May I rely on this?

Fre.—(*Presents her hand to him.*)—Most firmly.

Ell. God reward you, and when a young man, worthy of you, shall obtain this hand, the recollection of your present conduct must make you completely happy. God bless you!

[*Exit.*]

Fre.—(To *Lew. who is going.*)—Mr. Lewis!

Lew. Madam!

Fre. When I last saw you, I begged that our conversation might end. I now intreat your patience.

Lew. You need but command.

Fre. Pardon me, if I avail myself of this opportunity to speak on the subject with which your mind must at present be wholly concerned. Your father is justified in my eyes and in the eyes of Heaven, for his contrition has been sincere willingly, therefore, will I lend my aid to justify him in the eyes of the world. Repeat this to your sister and brother-in-law, to whom I would be happy to say it if I did not wish to make you the messenger of good tidings, who have so often gone to them for a far different purpose.

Lew. You surprise me—

Fre. Hear further. My uncle did not forget his friend, entirely—nor shall I forget him. Be assured that Mr. Talland may be at ease with respect to his children.

Lew. Can you by humiliating generosity—

Fre. Your father is just—you are just—allow me to be so too.—I shall rejoice to see you more happy and composed.

[*Exit.*

Lew. My admiration of her sense and virtue increases each time that I converse with her, but it is, thank Heaven, admiration unmingled with interested motives.

Enter BOLFIELD.

Bol. Pshaw! Never tell me—

Lew. What do you want, sir?

Bol. Not you for a son-in-law, Mr. Light-purse.

Lew. Scoundrel, I'll kick you out of doors.

Bol. But not 'till you have paid me—and paid me handsomely too. Oh that I had known this story of the will

sooner! You should have offered me a round sum on your knees.

Lew. If you have any regard for your bones—

Bol. You ought to thank me for only bawling within doors, for if I were to proclaim what I know in the street, every window of the house would be broken in a trice.

Enter RATHING.

Rath. Be quiet, I beseech you, and have compassion on the old man.

Bol. What! Have compassion on a man, who held a pistol to my sister's breast!—At a word—eight thousand dollars I'll have—or the devil himself shall be let loose.

Rath. But Miss Soltau will obtain the fortune.

Bol. That's your concern—not mine. The money I will have, and if my sister had not been a great fool, we should have had a great deal more long ago.

Rath. I have already made the utmost offer.

Bol. What! a few paltry dollars, forsooth! Will you, or will you not give me eight thousand?

Rath. I will not.

Bol. Then abide by the consequence. [Going.]

Enter ELLOF.

Ell.—(*Detains Bol.*)—Holla, townsman!

Bol. Townsman! Who are you?

Ell. One, who proceeds with vigour, when he discovers villainous intentions. I know Mr. Bolfeld well. Submit, or dread me.

Bol. Damnation! What do you mean?

Ell. You shall have a thousand dollars, on condition that you and your sister sign an article, declaring it to be your joint opinion that no second will was ever made. Instantly

consent, or the nefarious traffic in smuggled goods, between you and Reefeld, shall be brought to light, and Mr. Bolfeld's dismissal must of course ensue. Answer.

Bol. Smuggled!—Does a run-away fellow presume to accuse me—

Ell.—(*Seizes him by the collar.*)—Scoundrel!—

Bol. Mercy on me—for Heaven's sake.

Ell. You have robbed the government of its revenue, and that part of its revenue, which you are appointed to receive.

Bol. Pray, sir, can you produce any proof of this?

Ell. I can, villain. The waggoners employed by you are ready to testify it.

Bol.—(*Aside.*)—Damnation!

Ell. Now consent instantly, or I will proceed to establish your guilt.

Bol. Mercy on me!—I must first consult my poor sister, and if she has no objection—

Ell. Begone, then. A thousand dollars—and no more. Begone, I say.

Bol. I always told the blockhead to bring the affair to a conclusion. Now, we must be satisfied with a paltry thousand.—The stupid old fool! [*Exit.*]

Ell. That fellow is secured. Reefeld and I, lived in the same village, and I was lately apprized of the connection between him and Bolfeld. I was resolved to expose their villainy, but rejoice I have so good a reason for concealing it. We must now disarm Wehrman. Go to your father, Mr. Lewis—receive the money designed for the payment of your debts, and take leave of him.

Lew. I will not forsake my father.

Rath. Leave!

Ell. The carriage is ordered. He must quit this place for a short time.—I own I wish your wife could accompany him.

Ratb. She can and will.

Ell. Some one else must accompany him too, if all be as I wish.

Lew. I repeat that I will not forsake him.

Ell. If you will not confirm his melancholy by letting him perceive your own, I can have no objection. Remember you must support me in every thing. Wehrman will come, I presume?

Lew. Very soon.

Ell. Go then—summon your spirits, and return with a cheerful countenance.

Lew. As cheerful as it can be. [Exit.

Ell. Now to business again.—Wehrman can make no complaint respecting a concealed will, if the heiress deny its existence. We must confuse him by a bold stroke.—(*Espies Fre.*)—It is well you come.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. It cannot be pleasant to any one that I should any longer remain in this house.—(*Presents a paper to Ell.*)—Here is my grateful acknowledgment of Mr. Talland's bounty.

Ell. Generous girl! Will you rescue the good man entirely? It is in your power.

Fre. Most willingly.

Ell. Will you, to effect this, undertake—what I dare scarcely ask?

Fre. Any thing compatible with my honour.

Ell. His melancholy situation—makes me venture any request, by which my friend can be rescued.—My dear girl, consent for a short time to acknowledge yourself engaged to Lewis. The most solemn article shall be given to you, declaring you are free. Confess that you are engaged to him in the presence of Wehrman, and leave this place with us.

At the expiration of a few weeks, it may be said that not finding him the man, with whom you can be happy, you have declined his addresses, and that his father, incensed at his conduct, has restored to you the property of your uncle. Thus, for a short time we shall silence the world, and all will, meanwhile, be properly adjusted. Do you feel yourself capable of doing so much to save my unhappy friend?

Fre.—(*After a pause.*)—As far as I can at present judge—it will not be easy to me.—

Rath. That I feel.

Fre. But if you both think that it will produce such happy consequences—

Rath. It will, it will.

Fre. I will consent to it, then, on the conditions you have mentioned.

Rath.—(*Kisses her hand.*)—I admire—revere you.

Ell. The deed by which you are acknowledged to be at liberty, you shall receive from me. Now, Wehrman is completely disarmed. Go, dear generous girl. We expect him every moment.—(*Exit Fre.*)—When he comes, we must, as if by accident, make some allusion to the pretended connection between the young people.

Enter TALLAND, LEWIS, and MRS. RATHING.

Come, my friend—hold up your head. All goes on as we wish.

[*Tal. looks at him.*]

Rath. You may be at ease now, dear sir. [*Tal. sighs.*]

Lew. I accompany you on the journey—don't I, my father?

Tal. Journey!—(*Reflects awhile.*)—Yes—I must begin the journey—

Ell. Right, my good friend.

Tal.—(*Takes his daughter's hand.*)—Do you hear?

Mrs. R. We are all of one opinion in that respect, dear father.

Ell. Miss Soltau consents to the declaration that she is engaged to Mr. Lewis.

Lew. To me!

Ell. Not another word. Obey, that you may prove your filial affection—but remember this is only a pretended engagement—

Lew. You need not remind me of that.

Ell. So much the better. All, then, is settled. You must now, my friend, lend us some little assistance by appearing cheerful as we pass through the streets, after which we will allow you a tear, if you feel yourself thereby relieved.

Tal.—(*Smiles.*)—I have shed many tears—and I remember they relieved me—but how to appear cheerful—I know not.—(*Looks round.*)—I feel as if I was many years older—(*Sighs.*)—I am so weary—

Mrs. R.—(*Apart to Ell.*)—Heavens! What means this?

Ell.—(*With composure.*)—I am sorry for it.

Tal. Give me a chair—I cannot bear my sorrows and my body.—(*Seats himself.*)—The burden is too great—too great.

Ell. You will soon be better, my good friend.—(*Tal. shakes his head, and smiles.*)—You will, indeed.

Tal. Not here—not here.—Maria, come hither—seat yourself close to me—close to my heart.

Mrs. R.—(*Takes a chair.*)—Dearest father!

Tal. I thought I had something more to say to you.—Perhaps, it would have been better, if I had not seen you—for the sight of you distresses me.

Lew.—(*Kneeling before him.*)—My father!

Tal. Maria, your hand!—You were always good.—Your hand too, Lewis.—It trembles, my son.—I wanted to tell you that I love you—and you too, Rathin. This is old—but it is true.

Ell. You must not give way to this despondency, friend.

Mrs. R. Oh, cease, or you will break my heart.

Tal. I will no longer distress any one.—(*Clasps his hands, and looks round.*)—Oh!—(*Strikes his breast.*)—Open a window.—(*Lew. obeys.*)—I am so hot—so oppressed—and—(*Beckons to Ell. who approaches—and to whom he whispers.*)—Don't let them all flit before me thus.

Ell. I'll prevent it.—(*Shakes his head, turns away, and wipes his eyes.*)

Tal. Must it be so?—Well, well—it is late—and I must go to the chancellor.— [*Rises.*

Mrs. R. Compose yourself, dear father.—(*Causes him to sit down again.*)—Compose yourself.

Tal. Is not that Mr. Wehrman?

Rath. He is not here, sir.

Tal. Indeed!—(*Sighs.*)—Wehrman is the cause of my being obliged to go away.—(*A pause.*)—I was thinking that as I must go away, and we are now together, I might give you some good advice—for who knows when we shall meet again?

Lew. Your will shall be our law.

Tal. Much will be said against me now, and after my death—but you must not attend to it. You, Maria, must not weep when you hear my honour called in question—and you, my sons, must not be violent, as good sons might be on such an occasion. Call to mind that you are good children, but that I—was not a good father.

Ell. For Heaven's sake, cease, I beseech you.

Tal.—(*Wipes his eyes.*)—Now I have been obliged to weep.—Yes. I must go—I must leave my family, my na-

tive land, and the tomb which contains your mother, and which I wished to have contained me too.—(*Gazes at all with folded hands.*)—Old and infirm as I am, I must fly and avoid the sight of every honest man.

Ell.—(*Much agitated.*)—Cease, I say. I command—I insist upon it.

Tal.—(*Seems somewhat alarmed, looks at Ell. and then says with composure*)—Yes—I obey—I'll do any thing you wish.—I have no will—I may not have a will.—(*In a friendly tone to Ell.*)—Shall I go?

Ell. Yes—your son and daughter will accompany you on the journey.

Lew. and Mrs. R. Yes, dear father.

Tal. Don't deceive me, for were I to leave my home without you, it would break my heart.

Lew. and Mrs. R. We will accompany you, indeed.

Tal. Well—take my blessing for your filial affection.—I may be allowed to bless you—for the greatest criminal is allowed before his execution—

Mrs. R.—(*Kneels.*)—I receive with gratitude the blessing of the best and most unfortunate of fathers.

Lew.—(*Kneels.*)—The blessing of Heaven.

Tal. Never become rich—never—never—for I can tell you in confidence—(*Draws his children to him.—Rath. unperceived by his wife takes the hand of Ell. and points with a look of anguish to his forehead.*)

Ell. Oh God!

Mrs. R.—(*Turns away and throws herself into the arms of her husband.*)—He is lost.

Tal.—(*Seems to be seeking something in his breast.*)—See—here—there—(*Puts his hand to his head*)—and there—how painful!

Lew. What thus distresses you?

Tal. Conscience, conscience.—Oh, I am hot—dreadfully hot—and you—you are all in tears.—Right! I have robbed you of every thing—but forgive me—for although I make you unhappy, I am so too—and I am still your father.
[Throws himself into the arms of his son.]

Enter WEHRMAN.

Web. I hear strange news, indeed.

Ell. Come, madam. We will conduct your father to his room.

Tal.—*(Rivets his eyes on Weh.)*—There he is. I am ready.—*(To the rest.)*—Farewell!

Web. Are you not well?

Tal.—*(Releases himself.)*—I am extremely well.—*(Presses Wehrman's band.)*—I sincerely thank you for having relieved me.—*(Gives his keys to Rath.)*—There!—*(Kisses his daughter, and embraces his son and friend.)*—Yes—I am released. Celebrate my release without a curse.

Leav.—*(To Weh.)*—Oh leave us.

Tal. Peace!—Listen to me.

Ell. You are too weak—

Tal. Mr. Wehrman, you are my friend. I may intrust it to you.

Ell.—*(To Weh.)*—Sir, you see his situation.—*(Seizes Tal. by the arm.)*—Come to your room.

Tal. No—no—I must first make peace—I will honourably restore all—

Rath. He has made his daughter-in-law a present of the Soltau estate
[Leading him away.]

Tal. See—they want to drag me away. Help!

[They quit their hold.]

Web. Compose yourself, Mr Talland.

Tal.—(*Goes towards Weh.*)—The will was false—totally false.— [*Mrs. R. almost faints. Rath. supports her.*]

Lew. You see his situation, Mr. Wehrman.

Weh. I go.

Tal. No. Stay. All is well.—I feel better than I was.—I feel easier—more cheerful.———Ha! What are those men bearing?—See—there—see—how kindly he looks at me.—Don't you see him—old Soltau?—There, to the right—there he lies——Silence! Silence!—His eyes are closed. He is asleep.—I'll wake him.

[*Totters towards a chair.—Lew. supports him.*]

Mrs. R. Oh my father, my father!

Ell. His senses are fled?

Lew. There is your victory.

Weh.—(*Agitated.*)—Oh I wished not for such a victory.

Tal.—(*Kneels before the chair.*)—Awake! Awake!—I have restored all—I have no more.—Pursue me no longer—awake and forgive me—awake!—Ha!—He opens his eyes—he offers me his hand—he draws me to him.—(*With a cry of horror.*)—Oh! How cold you are!—(*Becomes very weak.*)—So cold—so cold—oh!—(*His breath begins to fail—he contends against the oppression and attempts to rise.*)—Let me—(*They support him.*)—Let me——

Weh.—(*To Ell.*)—I will maintain that I have seen and heard nothing.—This is too much. [*Exit.*]

Tal. So cold——so dark—(*Draws breath with great difficulty.*)—Now I am well—very well.

[*Staggers, and becomes convulsed.*]

Rath. A chair!

Tal.—(*Starts from the arms of those who support him.*)—Fire! Fire!—Oh!—

[*Falls—his breast heaves high—he expires.*]

Mrs. R. Help! Help!

[*Rushes out.*]

Lew. God of Heaven! [*Kneels and takes his hand.*

Rath.—(*With uplifted hands, and voice choaked with tears.*)—Oh conscience, conscience!

Ell.—(*Casts a look of agony towards Tal.*)—My friend!
—We shall meet again. [*The curtain falls.*

THE END.

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Act V.

band.

with

riend !

falls.